

October 2020

State Director's Angle **Bias Has No Place In Our Work**

By State Director Michael Leach



SCDSS recognizes we, as a social services system, are not immune to the challenges posed by racial bias, and we also recognize that these challenges affect those we serve and our staff as well. We acknowledge there are times when poverty is confused or misidentified as neglect. Poverty alone does not equate to neglect, and we are working to transform this thinking at all levels of the agency to a focus on connection of resources.

I ask you, our community, to change your perspective on this with us. We acknowledge that there are times when families we serve enter our system as a result of bias, racism, and lack of access to resources. We also recognize that we cannot achieve our agency mission to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of children, youth, families and vulnerable adults, without confronting these issues head on. SCDSS is emphasizing guiding

principles of being **family-centered, individualized and strengths-based, trauma-informed and culturally responsive**. This focus will help us achieve better outcomes for children, families and all we serve.

October is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Awareness Month

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, most commonly referred to as **SIDS**, is the sudden, unexpected death of a baby younger than one year of age, with no known cause even after a complete investigation. These deaths often happen during sleep or in the baby's sleep area. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), each year, there are about 3,500 [sudden unexpected infant deaths \(SUID\)](#) in the United States. Use and share the tips below to help avoid SIDS. Click [here](#) to learn more.

4 TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS TO HELP BABY SLEEP SAFELY



Place your baby on his or her back for all sleep times - naps and at night.



Use a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety-approved crib.



Keep soft bedding such as blankets, pillows, bumper pads, and soft toys out of baby's sleep area.



Have baby share your room, not your bed.

State of South Carolina

Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, established to increase school readiness, Head Start is a comprehensive child development program that serves children ages 0-5 from low-income families; and

WHEREAS, Head Start programs provide services inclusive of early childhood development, education, nutrition, parent involvement, and medical, dental, and mental health in order to address individual needs; and

WHEREAS, Head Start has developed its services to be appropriate and responsive to the developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experiences of each child and family; and

WHEREAS, in the Palmetto State, more than 12,153 children are receiving services by way of Preschool, Early, Migrant, and American Indian Head Start programs and Early Head Start/Child Care Partnerships; and

WHEREAS, Head Start has a 55-year history of delivering quality services that contribute to the healthy development of vulnerable children across our state and nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Henry McMaster, Governor of the great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim October 2020 as

HEAD START AWARENESS MONTH

and October 22, 2020, as

HEAD START AWARENESS DAY

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to recognize the positive contributions of this quality program that provide young children with a real head start in life.



Henry McMaster

HENRY McMASTER
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Head Start Awareness Day is October 22

October is National Head Start Awareness Month and Governor McMaster has declared October 22 as Head Start Awareness Day in South Carolina.

Started 55 years ago, Head Start is a comprehensive, education, medical, dental, early intervention, nutrition, and parenting program, focused on lifting children and their families up and out of poverty. A federal-to-local program, Head Start serves over 12,000 South Carolina children ages zero to five in 45 of the 46 counties.

The South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office is housed in the Division of Early Care and Education at SCDSS.

For information about SC Head Start, click

[here.](#)

New Virtual Tool Equips Foster Parents with Essential Information

This fall, SCDSS will launch the Child and Adult Information Portal (CAIP), a new online tool to help the state's foster parents quickly access important information about children placed in their care. The CAIP includes school records and health information and allows SC Foster Parents to log-in to the secure DSS website using a smartphone, tablet, desktop or laptop computer, to instantly view and update information about the children in their care, such as:

- Immediate healthcare needs
- Allergies
- Prescribed medications
- Physical, mental and behavioral healthcare provider information
- Dental provider information
- Immunization records
- Information about developmental needs
- Previous school records
- Awards and achievements
- Special interests
- Family, adult and community connections
- Events
- Visitation and maintaining connections
- ...and much more!

The portal is scheduled to go live late fall, with training for users expected to begin soon. The CAIP was created by the SCDSS Division of Technology Services and the USC College of Social Work and Health Information Technology Consortium, and was funded by The Duke Endowment. The project team was informed by interviews and focus groups with SC foster parents, DSS case managers, supervisors, child placing agencies, education stakeholders and many others throughout the state.





ADVISORY for PARENTS and CAREGIVERS of children learning at home...

The SC Department of Social Services must grant approval for temporary child care operations designed to support children during school-time care, e-learning care, virtual learning, and/or extended school time care due to schools not providing in-classroom instruction. [Learn more or apply for a temporary certificate to operate a school-age child care facility during the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)



New software a game changer for Child Welfare Services case management

This week marks the official kick-off of the pilot implementation of SafeMeasures®, a partnership initiative between SCDSS and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD).

SafeMeasures is a web-based reporting program designed to help frontline Child Welfare Services workers use data to manage their caseloads more efficiently and effectively. This tool also amplifies the agency's overarching goal of creating a work culture dedicated to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).

NCCD designed SafeMeasures so case managers can focus the most of their time serving the needs of the children and families on their caseloads. This powerful, easy-to-use application utilizes data entered into the agency's Child and Adult Protective Services System (CAPSS) to create real-time, interactive dashboards to show case managers what work they need to do and what work has been completed.

Some of the most exciting and practical features of SafeMeasures include:

- Using addresses in CAPSS to generate a map showing where clients on a caseload live;
- Dashboards show how long investigations and ongoing cases have been open;
- Notifications inform the case manager about due dates for staffings, face-to-face contacts, court dates, children's birthdays and other needed reminders;
- Color-coded indicators (green, yellow, red) mark timeliness of key tasks;
- And, much more!

The SafeMeasures pilot initiative engages nearly 100 Investigations and Family Preservation professionals, with the official, full launch of the program planned for January 2021. Upon successful integration of SafeMeasures in these units, broader use of the application could be considered for other SCDSS program areas.



Did you know...

South Carolina has 900,000 residents age 65 and older, which is 18% of the state's entire population. Almost 75,000 of these senior adults live in poverty.

[Click here to visit our website to learn more about Adult Protective Services](#)

New Child Support Services Portal Coming in early 2021!

The [SCDSS Child Supports Services Division](#) will launch a Customer Service Portal for parents – those paying child support and those receiving payments - so they can view important information about their case – any time, any day.

Parents can create a unique user ID and password and view payment information, hearing dates, enforcement measures in place, and occasional announcements affecting customers. Parents will also be able to update addresses, phone numbers, employment and other contact information as well as send inquiries to Child Support customer service staff.



Fraud Alert!

**Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program**

This month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded a grant to SCDSS as part of ongoing efforts to enhance program integrity of the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#).

USDA is providing \$5.5 million in SNAP Fraud Framework Implementation Grants to combat recipient fraud as well as more than half a million in Income Verification Grants to help states ensure SNAP households receive the accurate amount of SNAP benefits.



SCDSS Employees of the Month

Seven DSS professionals are recognized by State Director Michael Leach as October Employees of the Month.

Nominated for their hard work and for leading with **Competence, Courage and Compassion** are (left-right, top-bottom): **Danielle Jones**, Communications & External Affairs, Columbia; **Glenise Elmore**, Human Resource Services, Columbia; **Tiffany Lemieux**, Adult Protective Services, Anderson; **Kristi Moulton**, Child Welfare Services, Walhalla; **Dorothy Duncan**, Child Support Services, Florence; **Tonya Franks**, Program Support, Columbia; and, **Anchalee Price**, Legal, Columbia.

Normally, EOM honorees join Director Leach for lunch in Columbia, but this recognition will be virtual! Honorees receive a designated parking space for the entire month, a DSS lapel pin, a gift card for purchasing their lunch during the virtual luncheon and an announcement sent to their local newspaper. Congratulations all!



Foster Parent Association Recognizes DSS Social Worker of the Month

The South Carolina Foster Parent Association recognizes Courtney Truesdale of Richland County as the October Social worker of the Month.

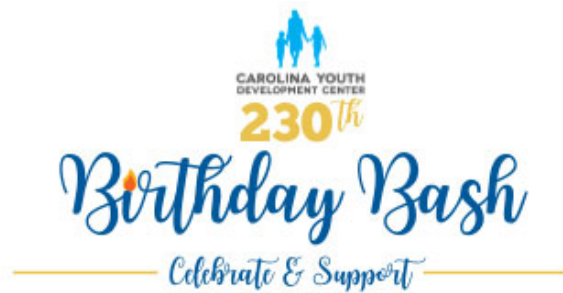
Congratulations Courtney and thank you for outstanding service to children and families!

Saluting Our Partners!



Congratulations to **Children's Trust of SC** on the launch of **scParents.org**, a statewide resource for families searching for local services and supports. Parents and caregivers simply enter their zip code into the search bar to return an array of free and reduced-cost assistance in their communities, including parenting services, food, housing, financial and legal help, and health services.

Congratulations to the **Carolina Youth Development Center (CYDC)** on their 230th Birthday! In addition to this big milestone, CYDC recently cut the ribbon on their brand-new Family Support Center, located in the George Williams Building on the North Charleston campus. CYDC's Family Support Center will serve families in the Lowcountry by providing services, including individual and family therapies and community-based prevention services. [Happy Birthday, CYDC!](#)



Congratulations to **Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc. (MIRCI)** for being selected as a Street Outreach Program grantee by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families. MIRCI will implement the Columbia Metro Street Outreach Program in the Columbia metro area of SC to provide street-based services to runaway, homeless and street youth younger than 21 years of age who have been subjected to, or are at risk of being subjected to, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking. Services will be provided in the community, on the streets, in parking garages, at youth encampments, at local youth-serving and mainstream providers, and at other known locations where youth congregate. Youth Street Outreach Workers will build relationships with runaway, homeless, and street youth to keep them safe and provide access to emergency shelter or safe and stable housing.

CARES ACT ANNOUNCEMENT

Relief Grant Program for Minority and Small Businesses

The SC CARES Grant Management Program allows public and private entities to submit requests for reimbursements for eligible COVID-19 related expenses. The program provides grants to minority and small businesses to reimburse qualifying expenditures for providing services or for revenue loss due to COVID-19. Grant awards range from \$2,500 to \$25,000. Visit [**accelerateSC**](#) to learn more or apply online.



Report abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults.

DSS
SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT of SOCIAL SERVICES

1-888-CARE4US

Click here to view our
video message about
safety during response
to the COVID-19
Pandemic.



SC Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 1520
Columbia, SC 29202-1520



SC Department of Social Services | P.O. Box 1520 , 1535 Confederate Ave., Columbia, SC
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